

SPOOR Meeting

28 May 2019

Citizen M, Schiphol

1. Welcome and Introductions

Present: Marco Bondi, Francisco Colomer, John Conway (JEC), Rene Vermeulen (RCV), Leonardo Testi, FC. Iza , Rainer Mauersberger, Anton Zensus (via video)

Apologies Karl Schuster, Carole Jackson

2. Review of previous meeting

MAG: presented the discussion up until now. So far three options had been discussed at SPOOR meetings: (i) a continued evolution of the JIV-ERIC (*JIVE+*) taking on new responsibilities for organising various central activities of common interest incl. hosting the CRAF FM, (ii) a major expansion of the JIV-ERIC (*JIVE++*) to include activities (e.g. SKA RC, ILT etc) that currently reside outside of its core modus operandi and (iii) the establishment of a light MoU-based organisation building on the RadioNet-work entity discussed by the earlier QueSERA initiative.

3. EC Pilot update

AZ: RadioNet will come to an end after current contract finishes. Pilot project involving both RadioNet and Opticon will be focused on TNA (incl, Virtual TNA) - 15Meuro for 4 yrs. RadioNet and OPTICON developing a joint vision that would also seek to improve TNA services, access, coordination and support. RadioNet Sub-group formed to push this forward. Start of pilot project would be 1/1/2021 (nicely dovetails with RadioNet4), proposal deadline 17/3/2020, EC Call available 28/11/2019.

Opticon struggling with the concept of no JRAs. Some of these JRAs were/are mission critical. It is also a challenge for Opticon to deliver a large TNA programme. The possibility of joint RadioNet-Opticon WPs will be explored e.g. co-funding models, harmonising access, data processing/archives. The question of project coordinator will be re-visited once the programme of work is mature.

4. Update on recent joint EVN & JIVE Board/Council meeting.

The EVN and JIVE Board/Council have considered how a closer collaboration

might be achieved both in terms of meeting structures and activities that could be centralised at JIVE. Starting with small first steps forward e.g. newsletter produced by JIVE. Eventually central activities associated with scheduling, PC admin etc could be located at JIVE.

RCV noted that the ILT was a mature organisation that was still expanding. LOFAR2.0 is a major upgrade and represents a significant investment by the various partners. As the number of partners continues to increase, the ILT governance model needs to be reviewed. Ambitions to improve collective fund raising (funding alignments), optimisation of partner resources, connecting to national roadmaps/strategy. ERIC is interesting option for ILT and this is being

5. Update on Personal visions of the coordination/organisation of European Radio Astronomy – to discuss – All

Various points were made by the participants:

- Need a strong body to be competitive with SKA.
- How do we test these ideas vs the community?
- How can we have the best of all these options?
- Loss of RadioNet has a negative impact on joint technical developments, technical exchanges, strategic planning.
- Staged approach of JIVE+ => JIVE++ was plausible and solved a lot of problems but not all.

AZ made the case for the creation of body that would represent the full breadth of European radio astronomy, adopting a role and range of activities similar to APPEC in astro-particle physics. An inclusive lobbying consortium that could represent the interests of cm and mm-wave astronomy in the European context. This would be an MoU based successor - self-funding, incl. in-kind contributions. Not a replacement for RadioNet but joint lobbying can be absorbed, roadmapping efforts explored, a "safe space" for others to focus, merge, to present to ext world in era of SKA.

6) Meeting summary

Three routes forward emerged from the May meeting. One in which there is a modest expansion of JIVE, picking up some of the NAs previously undertaken by RadioNet and with a closer relationship and potential fusion with the EVN. The second is a more ambitious expansion of JIVE and the ERIC concept for radio astronomy in general, that would see the ILT and potentially an SKA Regional centre activity running in parallel and with equal prominence to the current VLBI activity. The third route is to set up a replacement for some of RadioNet's strategic programme with a body similar to APPEC in particle

astrophysics. There was a general feeling within the core SPOOR group, that all of these routes might need to be pursued in order to fully cover the broad European-based radio astronomy collaboration.